Pesticides – Landscaping Fatality File



Fatal Pesticide Exposure Incident in Landscaping

On August 14, 2023, a fatal pesticide exposure incident occurred during a residential landscaping project in Miami, Florida, resulting in the death of a 45-year-old landscaping worker, Michael Rodriguez. Rodriguez was applying a pesticide containing organophosphates to control a pest infestation when the incident happened.

According to the investigation, Rodriguez was not wearing appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) and was exposed to high levels of the pesticide due to a malfunctioning sprayer. Symptoms of acute pesticide poisoning, including severe respiratory distress and convulsions, appeared shortly after exposure. Despite immediate medical intervention, Rodriguez succumbed to the poisoning en route to the hospital.

The investigation identified several contributing factors, including inadequate PPE, lack of proper training on pesticide application, and failure to inspect equipment before use. The landscaping company has since implemented stricter safety protocols, including mandatory PPE for all pesticide applications, regular equipment maintenance checks, and comprehensive training programs on the safe use of pesticides.